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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Damien Evan Pitts entitled "New Destinations of Islamic Fundamental Terrorism: The Rise of Al Shabaab." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in Sociology.

Asafa Jalata, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

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New Destinations of Islamic Fundamental Terrorism: The Rise of Al Shabaab

**A Thesis Presented for the
Master of Arts
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville**

Damien Evan Pitts

August 2015

Acknowledgements

During my ten years in the United States Army as a human intelligence collector, I came face to face with various individuals accused of committing terrorist acts. This experience definitely led me to my interest in the subject of global terrorism while attending college, but in an effort to not be one dimensional and only focus on my own life as a catalyst for research, I decided to study a group about which I knew little, Al Shabaab. Studying this organization has allowed me to relate some of my personal experience, but has also fit into my deep interest of all that is Africa. Though the continent has always been a subject of intrigue, my knowledge was limited, but past research on the African diaspora made we want to continue on this path, and luckily I was able to find a topic that was a culmination of two passions.

I would like to thank a few people who have really guided me in the direction to success. The first is my advisor, Dr. Asafa Jalata, who has played such a major role in my focus on the African diaspora, and every time I am around you. Secondly, I would like to thank Dr. Tricia Redeker Hepner, one of my original committee members, who gave me the passion to examine human rights closely. Also, I would like to thank Dr. Michelle Christian who took a chance and joined my committee with little notice, for which I will forever be grateful. Last but not least, I want to recognize and thank Dr. Jon Shefner, who saw something in me five years ago that I did not even know existed, and opened my eyes to possibilities of which I never dreamed. I am truly thankful to have such patient and insightful mentors to guide me through this difficult but worthwhile process.

Abstract

The rise of Al Shabaab was achieved primarily in three ways. The first way was through the power granted to them as the militant wing of the Islamic Courts Union. Governmental legitimacy allowed them to enforce sharia law throughout Somalia, and this was reinforced even further as they were able to fend off Ethiopia's invasion. Secondly, they were able to surpass tribal affiliations and use Islam as the rallying tool to organize, and gain support in the face of a growing secular government. Lastly, Al Shabaab created alliances that provided them with logistical and financial support, to include Eritrea, Al Qaeda, foreign sympathizers, and displaced Somalis who fled previously, but were returning to support the organization. However, the aforementioned collective action caused problems. As power was gained, it was abused, and innocent civilians became casualties of their struggle to maintain legitimacy. Also, as allies increased from outside of Somalia, a movement that was once based on nationalism became elevated to one with international implications, causing internal strife between its members. Also, increased violence has made them more of a target for stronger forces that seek to destroy any forms of fundamental terrorism.

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Chapter I Introduction

Since the beginning of the Global War of Terrorism, there have been many efforts by the Western world in their desire to respond to any entities that threaten their ideas of democracy and freedom. However, new fundamentalist groups and sympathizers continue to grow exponentially, creating a vast global network of organizations who seek to halt the imposition of all that is Western. Some of them are widely known and well established, and world political powers have focused most of their attention on them, yet while this is occurring, others are utilizing this lack of attention to prosper. One of these groups is the Somalia based Al Shabaab.

The story of Al Shabaab is a complex one. Born out of a long history of religious fervor, colonial resistance, and the necessity to establish some form of order in a lawless nation, the once militant arm of an Islamic based governance system has emerged as fast growing terrorist organization with international reach. Recently, world powers are starting to realize the increased threat of Al Shabaab, and Western media sources have turned their cameras towards the East African nation and this group. Despite increased attention, there has been no major deployment of US troops or their allies. Somalia, like other African countries, does not appear to be a major concern for the West, and much of this can be tied to racist and Eurocentric ideologies that plague the world in relation to the diverse landmass which at one point was referred to as the “Dark Continent.” This mindset has served as the catalyst for Al Shabaab to exist, and even grasp political power within Somalia.

Recently, Al Shabaab has garnered much attention for two main reasons. The first reason is their declaration of allegiance to Al Qaeda in 2012 (Hansen 2013). Al Qaeda has been severely weakened in the last ten years, especially after the death of the elusive Usama bin Ladin. However, alliances such as the one with Al Shabaab proves that the ideology remains strong and has an audience, and adds to the ever growing fear of transnational terrorism. Al Qaeda’s backing could potentially lead to Al Shabaab

securing weapons and financial support, and the country of Somalia could quickly become a staging area for international attacks or a possible hiding location for leadership, though as of yet, there has been no substantial proof of this.

Secondly, Al Shabaab has begun to spread outside of Somalia, creating problems for US backed nations such as Kenya and Ethiopia, as well as the Western world. Recently Al Shabaab claimed responsibility occurred in Kenya's capitol, Nairobi, when militants killed 62 people at the Westgate Mall (Karimi 2013). Because of this and its past history with Somalia, the Ethiopian government has warned its citizens of possible attacks at the hands of Al Shabaab. Furthermore, there have been numerous American and European citizens who have left their homelands, and have become active members within the organization. This has been common within the ranks of Al Qaeda, but for such a small, grassroots group like Al Shabaab to recruit internationally proves that they could pose a major threat, as well as be the next major breeding ground for a worldwide terrorist threat.

Though Al Shabaab is starting to gain some recognition, the historical conditions that led to its rise seem to be greatly ignored. Colonialism, poverty, lack of infrastructure, and invasions by foreign military forces have all contributed to their rise. One unique factor in relation to their rise is that they were not founded in response to vast globalization and forceful cultural assimilation, but out of the desire of self-governance based on Islam. After the failed attempt by US led forces to remove Aidid from power in 1993, Somali citizens were left to fend for themselves due to government corruption and dire living conditions (Stevenson 1993). With minimal support from the outside entities and no established economy or proper government, locals looked to Islam and sharia law for guidance to protect them from greedy warlords who pillaged their way into power. Al Shabaab grew out of this need for protection, yet became illegitimate when they adapted the harsh tactics of the warlords they opposed. Even so, some of their legitimacy returned when they ousted US backed Ethiopian

forces in 2009 after a three year war. However, their patriotic deeds and origins drastically conflict with the nature of Al Shabaab in its current state.

The purpose of this thesis is to present a historical analysis about the rise and possible failure of Al Shabaab based on theories of power and collective action. In order to do so, Somalia must be studied from the eras of colonialism and introduction of Islam, and modernization. I propose that the struggle for Somalia to find its place within the world system and the concurrent lack of infrastructure has served as the catalyst for Al Shabaab to flourish. On the other hand, I propose that new alliances, international recruiting, and media exposure will lead to the demise of the organization for two reasons. The first reason is that increased exposure will heighten world awareness to only the attacks and other negative actions by Al Shabaab, completely overshadowing any legitimacy it possesses. Additionally, the fear of Al Shabaab expanding will lead Western nations to target and suppress them to avoid another massive conflict. Second, Al Shabaab has undergone a forced change of mission. Al Shabaab is no longer a grassroots, pure Somali organization. This has already, and will continue to lead to friction between those who prefer to have a local focus and others who see the necessity to expand beyond the borders of Somalia. As seen with many other factions or social movements, dissidence within the ranks could ultimately cause it to implode and cease to be a factor in Somalia or the world as a whole. Regardless of the outcome, Al Shabaab has become a threat to global security, and must not be taken lightly.

Chapter II Terrorism, Legitimacy and Theorizing Power

Terrorism

There is currently no universally accepted definition of terrorism. However there have been very many attempts, especially by the Western powers who see dissident groups rooted in the peripheral world as a threat to world order. There is currently no universally accepted definition of terrorism. However there have been very many attempts to create one, especially by the Western powers who see dissident groups rooted in the peripheral world as a threat to world order. In “Terrorism as a Method of Terrorism”, Thomas Kapitan lays out the three main definitions used by the organizations at the forefront of suppressing terrorism: the US State Department, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the US Department of Defense (DOD). The common theme between the three is the use of politically motivated violence; however they vary in other terms. The State Department definition specifically mentions acts against noncombatants only, with no reference to armed forces or law enforcement. The FBI and Department of Defense definitions include unlawful force against governments and civilians/societies, to achieve political and social objectives, but the difference between the two is that the DOD mentions religious objectives as objectives as well (Kapitan 2004). If the US government, who is at the forefront of the global War on Terrorism, cannot decide on a concrete definition of terrorism, how can those of us who study the phenomenon come to a consensus that will help us guide our research?

Before I continued with my research, I felt it was essential to establish a definition of terrorism, especially in relation to Al Shabaab, and why I consider the group to be labeled as such an organization. This definition of terrorism is based off of years of studying the topic as a student, as well as my experience with terrorism while deployed to the Middle East, and is as follows: ***the lawful or unlawful act of a particular entity using violent or potentially violent force to scare, coerce, or physically harm those that oppose their ideology, or stand in the way of power gains, whether those be financial,***

territorial, ideological, etc. My definition encompasses actions taken by a state and insurgent based organizations that may or not be formally recognized by a governing body. In relation to Al Shabaab, it is important to have a multifaceted definition because the group was once a legitimate part of the transitional Somali government, yet broke free and became its own entity, free of rule from a rather corrupt and unstable administration that had failed to make any progress in the war torn nation.

As sociologists, we often find ourselves leaning on classical and contemporary sociological theory to guide our research, as well as paying homage to those who came before us; however, this is somewhat difficult because many of the theories are dated, and phenomena such as terrorism were not prevalent topics of discussion during the times in which many of these theories were written. Though other social sciences such as political science and psychology have focused on terrorism, the sociological analysis of terrorism only became a hot issue after the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center (Deflem 2004). However, this does not mean that there aren't theories, or a combination of theories that could aptly describe the expansion of terrorist groups. Three elements that I feel must be analyzed in order to fully understand Al Shabaab are legitimacy, power and collective action.

Legitimacy

Throughout this writing, the concept of legitimacy will be used frequently; however, from a terrorism perspective, is there even such a thing as legitimate terrorist organization? Initially I will offer two different definitions from political scientist Peter Stillman and sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset. The first definition is as follows: the compatibility of the results of the governmental output with the value pattern of the relevant systems, that is, those affected by these results (Stillman, 1974). To me, this means that the government must implement standards and abide by them as well, in a way that is aligned with the needs and values of their citizens. Stillman later goes on to state that revolutions against and obedience to a government are frequently justified if not

partially caused by men's ideas about what constitutes legitimate government (Stillman 1974). S.M. Lipset also provided a very clear description of legitimacy in his book *Political Man*, which states "Legitimacy involves the capacity of the system to engender and maintain the belief that the existing political institutions are the most appropriate ones for the society" (Lipset 1960). These definitions are very important in the case of Somalia, because through their history, and the history of Al Shabaab, civil conflicts have occurred based on one or more parties' viewpoint on the legitimacy of the government, and on the flip side, the belief of Al Shabaab and their followers that their form of Islam, as well as their tactics to spread their viewpoint, was legitimate.

Now that legitimacy has been defined, it is necessary to determine what elements have led to the increased or loss of legitimacy of the Somali government and/or Al Shabaab throughout history. One factor is corruption. Somalia has been plagued with corruption by leaders who abused their power for personal gain. Along with that has been the battle between Somali culture, Islam, and Westernization, which has caused much strife among various groups and transitional governments. With Al Shabaab, these struggles plague them as well, which could ultimately lead to their demise. This will be discussed in detail in later chapters.

Power

In my own terms, power is defined as the ability to control, or to have overwhelming strength when compared to another. As with terrorism, the definition of power is far from universal. From a Western hegemonic perspective, it seems impossible that any organization or state outside of the Global North would ever have any real power, but in various instances, this has proven to be false. Groups like Al Shabaab may not ever achieve levels of power at the levels of nations like the United States, but small victories have led to increased motivation, which could create a chain reaction of various types of success on various fields of achievement.

In John Gaventa's "Finding the Spaces for Change: A Power Analysis," he

discusses four types of power: power over, power to, power within, and power with.

“Power ‘over’ refers to the ability of the powerful to affect the actions and thought of the powerless. The power ‘to’ is important for the capacity to act; to exercise agency and to realize the potential of rights, citizenship or voice. Power ‘within’ often refers to gaining the sense of self-identity, confidence and awareness that is a precondition for action. Power ‘with’ refers to the synergy which can emerge through partnerships and collaboration with others, or through processes of collective action and alliance building (Gaventa 2006).

The aforementioned forms of power are important because they reduce the ambiguity and relativity of the term, therefore making it more universal and applicable to various stages within the lifespan of an organization, but also allows power to be seen in entities that are traditionally deemed powerless, especially when compared to large and established nation states, armed forces, etc. It is important to note that Gaventa is mainly focusing on the power of a state, but from a terrorism perspective, these same elements are very prevalent in non-state organizations, and can be seen especially in the rise of Al Shabaab. Gaventa further breaks down his analysis of power into forms, spaces, and levels, and this is illustrated in the “power cube.”

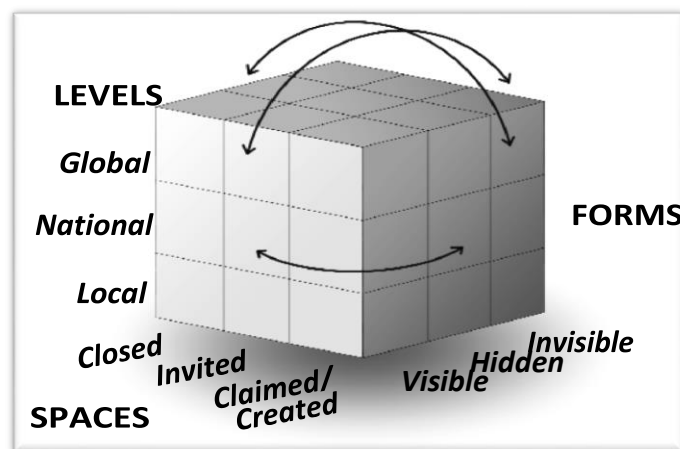


Figure 1: The ‘power cube’: the levels, spaces and forms of power

In relation to Al Shabaab, I have focused mainly on levels as opposed to spaces and forms. Here is my initial analysis in relation to the increase of power and spread of ideology of the organization:

Local

Al Shabaab was started in the African nation in Somalia, and initially derived power based on localized Islamic culture and tribal affiliations. Also, the group sought to maintain power in smaller areas, yet began to expand in order to establish a greater influence over the nation.

National

Al Shabaab became the militant arm of a post-civil war transitional government and derived its power based on nationalism, isolationism, and a desire to prevent outside influences, especially from the West and its allies. Though not a formal military group, they acted as such, and were supported by Somali citizens and even other African nations.

International

Somalia as a whole attracted international attention due to the various human rights violations exposed during the 1993 civil war. After the transitional government sought to reestablish power in later years, outside entities such as Ethiopia sought to invade the nation, yet others, such as Eritrea, became allies of the government in order to stop the spread of Ethiopia's power. As Al Shabaab became more militant and gained power, they were continually supported by Eritrea, as well as other dissident organizations, especially Al Qaeda.

The aforementioned levels appear to have happened in some type of natural, chronological order which may have led to expansion of Al Shabaab's power and success. However, these often happened simultaneously and were not always harmonic, leading to a power struggle which will be discussed later.

Collective Action

Along with power, it is essential to discuss collective action, which occurs when individuals join together to reach a common goal, whether it be to rid themselves of a grievance or increase their power. Collective action manifests when individuals seek some form of private reward, rather it be a job, money or power, which are often drawn from the store of resources from existing organizations (Hetcher et al 1982). Though this may be true for some, all the rewards are not necessarily private, but is for the greater good, and can include rewards such as freedom from an oppressive government or from an outside influence. Though the forming and actions of terrorist organizations are not commonly analyzed from a social movement perspective, it is important to realize that their motivations are very similar to those of more popular American social movements such as the Civil Rights and the Women's Rights Movement. For example, many terrorist organizations are formed in reaction to the overbearing Western hegemony. Also they seek to be recognized as legitimate, but as opposed to the desire to be seen as equal to an opposing side, they want to rid themselves of Western influence, seek self-governance, and they make it clear that they will continue to conduct violent acts in response to any opposition, whether it be physical or ideological. However, the same initial collective action that provided the catalyst for action could be the same that weakens a particular group. Whenever an organization grows in size and power, there will always be a struggle to maintain ideology, goals, and hierarchy, and with every cycle of evolution, there will be some dissidence that could lead to chaos and breakdown of unity. On the other hand, due to a governmental effort to punish those participants, failure of collective action may be high, which could dissuade others from joining (Hetcher et al 1982). With Al Shabaab, both of these situations have already occurred, and this may ultimately lead to weakness and/or destruction.

Power and Collective Action

My theory is centered on the interaction of power relations and collective action. Initially I focused on Richard Emerson's power dependency which is as followed:

Pab=Db a: the power of a over b is equal to the dependency of b on a.

This power is a property of a relation and that power is a potential. Power of course is affected by social structure and characteristics of actors (Ritzer 2003 p 421).

This theory was an initial starting point, but in my research, I have found that the factor of dependency is not always suitable to explain the rise of Al Shabaab. Based on this, the theory was altered to reflect collective action. Before presenting the theories, I have provided definitions for all the variables to be discussed and are as follows:

P:Power- The ability to control; to have overwhelming strength when compared to another.

a. Al Shabaab and allies

b. Those who oppose Al Shabaab, to include, Western forces/governments and their allies, as well as elements of transitional and current Somali government

a_{ca}: Collective action of Al Shabaab.

a-ca: Reduction or lack of collective action of Al Shabaab

b_{ca}: Collective action of those who oppose Al Shabaab

Based on these variables I have constructed three formulas that will set the tone for my analysis of Al Shabaab:

Pa is dependent on a_{ca}: The power of Al Shabaab is dependent on the collective action of Al Shabaab and its allies.

Pa decreases as a-ca occurs: The power of Al Shabaab decreases as their collective action is reduced.

Pb is dependent on b_{ca}: The power of those who oppose Al Shabaab is dependent on the collective action

All three levels of power, as well as how they correlate to collective action will be analyzed from a historical perspective. It is important to realize that any of the above

situations could occur at any time in the life cycle of Al Shabaab. Also, power as discussed in this research is not always based on physical strength, but is strongly based on ideology and self-perception. Truthfully speaking, it is highly unlikely that Al Shabaab will ever amass the amount of power of countries such as the United States, yet small victories and increasing influences will allow Al Shabaab a longevity that could be problematic for the world.

Chapter III History

Islam

Studies of terrorism often neglect the history of their countries of origins, and how it has led to the creation of such groups. In relation to Al Shabaab, this is very important in order to understand how they gained some form of legitimacy. The most important part of this history is tied to the rise of Islam in the African nation. Somalia is currently approximately 99 percent Muslim, with the majority of its practitioners being Sunni. With deep roots in the mystical Sufi sect, Islam in Somalia focuses on principles such as constant application of divine worship, complete devotion to God, abstinence from pleasure, and aversion from false splendor of the world (Peters 1994). Though there is no definitive date to denote when Islam made its way to Somalia, the religion has been around for approximately 1400 years, and scholars have speculated how this introduction occurred. One explanation is that the followers of the Prophet Muhammad brought the religion when they fled Mecca to avoid persecution. Another is that Islam was brought to the nation when Arab and Persian traders set up posts along the Somali coast (Ousman 2004). This second explanation is extremely important because it sets into play a relationship that would continually introduce Somalis to different types of more militant Islam which ultimately played a role in the rise of Al Shabaab, and this will be discussed in more detail later .

The spread of Islam in Somalia helped to establish city- states along the coast such as the capital city of Mogadishu and Zeila, yet also spread into nomadic communities outside of urbanized areas, which were controlled by clan leaders (Ahmed 2007). Some scholars believe that Islam added depth and coherence to elements of traditional culture and united Somalis who were previously defined by their many sectional divisions and provided the basis for their national consciousness. From another perspective, it is believed that Islam did not create a unity that transcended tribal loyalties. Instead, that unity was found in the form of ethnic solidarity and

a common language, yet garnered no political authority (Sanderson 1985). From the lens of Al Shabaab, I believe the first perspective is the most applicable to understand how the organization came into fruition. Introduction of Islam into the social structure of Somalia created somewhat of a bond with other Muslim nations, and as anti-Western sentiment increased in the Middle East, it would seem only natural that the perceived “attack on Islam” would be felt in Somalia, creating sympathizers who supported the actions of Islamic fundamentalist groups particularly those who are of the Sunni sect. As of now, there has not been any proof that Al Shabaab is anti-Shiite as other groups are, but based on their actions, they do seem to be anti-Christian. Islam also created a solidarity that prevented other religions from achieving dominance. Also, this Islamic based nationalism has served as the glue that has held Al Shabaab together. However, the second perspective is important to consider because the refusal of the modern Somali government to fully incorporate Islam into decision making, and choosing Western ideologies instead created frustration and the desire for an Islamic state, by any means necessary.

Colonization

Due to its coastal location, Somalia has long been in contact with foreign traders, such as Arabs, Indians, and the Portuguese, yet attempts to invade or colonize were infrequent or unsuccessful. Cities like Mogadishu were centers for trade and education, which both flourished under a series of Islamic sultanates. However, during the Scramble for Africa after the 1884 Berlin Conference, the European nations of Great Britain, and Italy claimed part of Somalia, with the former taking power in the North and in latter the south (Ware 1965). As the powerful countries laid their claim, there were those who were willing to stand up for their right to autonomy. One of these was Mohammed Abdullah Hassan, also known as the Mad Mullah, who led one of the greatest and long lasting resistance movements against Europeans.

Hassan was born in 1856 in the part of Somalia that would eventually be

controlled by the British. After undertaking the Hajj in the 1890s, he returned to his homeland and began to preach ideologies heavily influenced by the Sufi sect of Islam, but found little success. He moved from the Berbera area into the hinterland where he found more followers, and declared jihad on British authorities and Ethiopian rulers, as well as on those Somalis who were not deemed pious in his eyes (Slight 2010). Hassan and his continually growing number of followers defeated the colonizers on four separate occasions between 1901 and 1904 by using guerilla tactics that were a drastic shift from those of the highly regimented and conventional British forces. The 1905 Treaty of Ilig, signed by both British and Italian officials, provided Hassan and supporters with an autonomous piece of land located in Italian Somaliland along the Indian Ocean Coast (Kaptein, 1995). This peace lasted until 1909 when British forces began to occupy the Somali Coast. The jihad resumed, but was not as successful due to the fact that Hassan changed tactics from mobile to fixed defensive postures, which proved no match for the British. The jihadists continued to fight, but were ultimately defeated in 1920 by the British Royal Air Force and the Camel Corps, causing the death of many of Hassan's followers. Hassan fled to Ethiopia where he succumbed to influenza that year, and the remaining jihadists returned to their native lands, signaling an end to one of the once successful fights against colonialism in African history.

Steps Towards Independence and Autonomy

British maintained control of the British Somaliland until 1886 until 1940, when Italian troops declared war on Britain, subsequently invading the north. However in 1941, British forces captured all of Somalia. In 1949, the United Nations General Assembly gave Italy control of Italian Somaliland as an international trusteeship, only for it to become independent in April 1960. Britain followed suit five days later and British Somaliland joined with its newly free counterpart to define the modern nation of Somalia.

After Somalia achieved independence in 1960, prominent nationalist Aden Abdullah Osman Daar was elected as the nation's first president, and held the office until 1967, when he was defeated by Abdirashid Ali Shermarke, the man Daar appointed as Prime Minister in 1964. Shermarke was known for his foreign policy innovations, such as accepting money from the Soviet Union, as well as allowing them to build an air base in the nation. Other Western powers, such as the United States, West Germany, and Italy provided financial support which created small alliances between Somalia and these other nations (Ware 1960). As far as domestic policy, he promoted nationalism and representation from Somalia's diverse ethnic clans. For example, he allowed Shermarke's Prime Minister, Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, to increase the number of cabinet ministers to include every major clan family (Adam, 1994). Though this may have been favored by many Somali nationalists, corruption and injustices led to Shermarke's assassination in 1969, followed by a military coup led by Major General Mohamed Siad Barre, who became president that same year, remaining in power until he was overthrown in 1991. The fact that the coup was successful is important to examine as we reference our initial definitions of legitimacy, especially that of Lipset, because it shows that the public saw Barre as a leader who would eradicate the political, societal, and economical ills that the country suffered. (Ingiriis 2012). It was popularly believed that Barre's military, which was highly respected amongst Somali citizens, would bring the order and stability needed, yet this was not the case. Due to internal division and excessive human rights violations conducted by the military, citizens realized that these ills that they thought would dissipate remained, and in some ways became worse (Ingiriis 2012).

The Barre Years: Setting The Stage For Terror

President Mohammed Siad Barre fell victim to the same fate as many leaders of the African continent, and the culmination of greed and flawed foreign policy led to his overthrow. Barre attempted to play both sides of the Cold War and received financial and arms support from both the United States and the former Soviet Union; however aid from the United States was more abundant, therefore Somalia became one of their allies. (Johns 1989). American forces were allowed access to Somali military bases which served as a balance to Soviet military involvement in the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula (Johns 1989). From a social and educational perspective, Barre made room for Western trained intellectuals and implemented the use of Latin alphabet to write Somali. Also, he provided funding for students to go to Sudan and Saudi Arabia where Islamic trends of nationalism and support of sharia law were developing. Also during this time, the 1979 Iranian Revolution occurred, so a mixture of Islamic education and the witnessing of a revolution in a Muslim country that was heavily supported by students provided a new ideology that would be taken back to Somalia (Marchal 2011).

Though it seemed as if Barre was setting the stage for a new Somalia, his regime was also defined by human rights violations conducted against civilians by the Somali Armed Forces, leading the US government to begin to withdraw aid from Somalia in the 1980s. Also, armed clan based movements that sought control of various parts of Somalia weakened the Somali government, eventually leading to his overthrow in 1991. The leader of this ouster was warlord Mohammed Farah Aidid; the conflict ensued, leading to a civil war as various factions struggled to establish dominance over the war torn country.

Operation Restore Hope

The civil wars in Somalia left the nation with no established government, and due to the bloodshed, many were left homeless, or subject to the cruelty of war. 100,000 weapons left over from the Cold War fell into the hands of Somali teenagers high off of a methamphetamine known as khet, who roamed the streets raping, extorting,

and pillaging (Stevenson 1993). Human rights violations in Somalia became the target of worldwide humanitarian aid. In 1992, the United Nations sent aid to Somalia in support of United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM); however the aid quickly became a casualty of the conflict, going to the warlords for resale instead of to the suffering civilian populace. In August 1992, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) estimated that 4.5 million Somalis were, to varying degrees, going hungry (Stevenson 1993). To improve food distribution, the US led Unified Task Force (UNITAF), and took control of Mogadishu and eight other cities militarily. Initially, Aidid was in support of the aid, but he, as well as many other warlords and citizens alike, saw the foreign forces as colonizers, and demanded their withdrawal. This led Aidid to be seen as a threat to the humanitarian mission, and the US decided he needed to be captured.

Battle of Mogadishu

The Battle of Mogadishu opened the eyes of the world to the troubles of Somalia, yet from another perspective, it was the motivation for the influence of Islamic fundamentalism to continue to grow. As Aidid continued to pose a threat to peace efforts, a US led coalition devised a plan to remove him from power. In August 1993, Aidid's men managed to kill four US soldiers and wound seven others in two separate attacks, prompting then US President Bill Clinton to authorize a task force of US Special Operations personnel, commonly referred to as Task Force Ranger, to move into Somalia with the mission of capturing or killing Aidid and other high ranking members of his group (Bowden 1999). In early October of that year, intelligence was received that two of Aidid's top lieutenants were located in a safehouse in Mogadishu. As the Task Force moved into the city, men armed with rocket propelled grenades shot down US helicopters and destroyed military vehicles, ultimately ending in the death of 18 US service members (Bowden 1999). Bodies of dead military personnel were dragged through the street in celebration, and these events were broadcast on US media outlets, causing outrage among

Americans, and the mission was deemed a failure by many. By 1995, all UN personnel were pulled from Somalia, and support to the nation severely shrank.

On the other hand, Somali warlords and Islamic fundamentalists worldwide saw this as a victory. Bin Ladin quickly claimed that the militants who took down US forces during the battle were trained by al Qaeda. Bin Ladin said of the events: “We have learned from our brothers who fought in the jihad in Somalia of the incredible weakness and cowardice of the American soldier” (Geltzer 2010). Though there has been no concrete evidence, it could be said that their motivation may have been derived from a 1992 fatwa issued by bin Ladin that called for Muslims to wage jihad against American forces stationed in the Arabian Peninsula (Roshandel 2006). Bin Ladin, whose help had been rejected by the Saudi government during the First Gulf War, was furious, and looked for a way to prove to the world that he was to be taken seriously. If Somali militants were truly trained at al Qaeda camps, was the battle of Mogadishu the birthplace of Al Shabaab as well as the beginning of the rise of Al Qaeda? Other media reports have stated that Bin Ladin later recanted his organization’s involvement, and different leaders within Al Shabaab have supported or refuted the claim; however the 2012 allegiance is not disputed. Regardless, defeat of the world’s most powerful military has served as motivation for the fight to continue. I believe that the Battle of Mogadishu, along with other small victories elsewhere, provided the inspiration for the jihad on the West to persevere, and without it, Islamic fundamentalism may not be as prominent as it is today.

Lawlessness and Transition

After UN presence disappeared from Somali soil in 1995, Aidid declared himself president, but this did not last long, for he died of a heart attack in 1996 after suffering gunshot wounds during a battle with an opposing warlord. Peace talks were attempted to no avail, leaving Somalia without a recognized government until 2004 when the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was founded. The TFG sought to bring various warlord clan factions together. Also, the new government

attempted to outlaw sharia law establish a three part judicial system, and implement laws that supported human rights. However, the TFG remained unable even to establish a base in Mogadishu because of the threat of violence (Marten, 2007).

In opposition, various Islamist organizations united within a long-standing network of local Islamic or sharia courts in Mogadishu, came together under an umbrella organization, popularly known in the Western media as the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) (Barnes and Hassan, 2007). The ICU was favored by many Somali citizens because they seemed able to bring some order, and they did not attempt to ally themselves with or mimic Western powers as the TFG had done. However, the strictness of sharia law as well as the corruption that has plagued every form of Somali order led to its reduced support. Al Shabaab was the military wing of the ICU, but soon lost favor of the ICU due to their harsh tactics used against civilians. When Ethiopian troops invaded Mogadishu in 2006, members of Al Shabaab fought against the US backed force, yet were ousted from the capital city; however they were able to regroup and force Ethiopia out three years later (Hansen 2013).

Chapter IV Al Shabaab: The Organization

Al Shabaab, which literally means “The Youth,” started out as the military force of the ICU, a coalition of sharia courts that sought to store peace and stability in southern and central Somalia. This coalition was created in reaction to the corruption and heinous acts conducted by the TFG and Ethiopia, such as genocide and collective punishment (Roque 2009). The ICU did, and Al Shabaab still does, believe in religion as a way to solve societal problems, which was a stark contrast to the Somali government. As members of Al Shabaab became more discontented with the passiveness of the ICU, they continued to enforce sharia law by way of fear and terror (Hansen 2013). As Western influence returned to Somalia, Al Shabaab grew, expanding their ranks to young and old, foreign and domestic. Part of their appeal was their ability to always take clan sensitivities into consideration, and although its strict interpretation of Islam and notions of justice are questioned by sections of Somali society, many believed that it led to the reduction of crime and corruption (Kisiangani 2011).

The mid 2000s was an integral time for the growth of Al Shabaab. In 2006, the small and unorganized group was easily defeated by the occupying Ethiopian forces, and from another perspective, they lost credibility with their countrymen due to their assassinations of government officials and aid workers (Marchal 2011). However, they remained dedicated to their cause of eradicating their nation of invaders, and regrouped to beat Somalia in 2007. This is important to mention because it shows the ability of Al Shabaab to withstand setbacks. It also defines a common theme in the power struggle in Somalia, which is violence. Throughout the nation’s history, death and destruction has been the reason for political change. Al Shabaab has been able to use fear of death as a tool to establish some form of dominance and respect among Somalia’s citizens, yet these same tactics have also led to waning support and outside intervention. This will be discussed later in more detail, but it is essential to address when looking at the origins of Al Shabaab.

The allegiance to Al Qaeda in February 2012 brought them onto the international scene; however this allegiance is not shared by all of its members. Senior officials have committed themselves to a global agenda, such as expanding their attacks outside of Somalia and even the African continent, but lower ranking fighters adhere to a local agenda based on clan loyalty and nationalism (Yamamoto 2012). In the past two years, Al Shabaab has grown exponentially and has become recognized as a threat to national and global security, conducting attacks in their homeland, as well as neighboring nations such as Kenya and Ethiopia. Though the world is slowly recognizing the dangers of this group, and some assistance has been directed towards the war torn country, the seriousness of this threat has not received the reactions on the level as conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. If the world continues to ignore Somalia and its potential to be the next phase of the Global War on Terrorism, Al Shabaab will continue to terrorize citizens of the Horn of Africa and neighboring countries, possibly even expanding outside of the African continent.

This next section will examine Al Shabaab and its growth, as well as the potential of its downfall. Each piece will center on the aforementioned theoretical perspectives interchangeably. It is important to note that all of these proposed actions happen concurrently, and at any time, the power dynamic and level of collective action could shift. Information presented comes from a combination of scholarly books and articles, and world news sources that have provided the most up to date information on the actions of Al Shabaab.

It is important to examine the factors of collective action that led to the creation of Al Shabaab. This group has the potential to become a powerhouse within the realm of terrorism, and could even attain legitimacy based on particular actions. First I want to discuss the power that has allowed them to become a formidable opponent, which is Islam. In a nation torn by war and poverty, religion was the one pillar that provided support. Ultimately, the commandments of Islam established social control and solidarity

when the government could not.

Soon a new and more militant form of Islam served as a tool for Somalis to come together. These radical ideologies came from two fronts. The first was as the hands of a government that limited religious influence in politics. During Barre's regime, the political system was hostile to assertions of an Islamic agenda, because he felt it had no place in government (De Wall 2004). The second front has been in play for centuries, but the potential of fundamentalist Islam had not manifested until the second half of the 20th century. As mentioned before, the geographical location of Somalia served an important role in the introduction of Islam to Somalia, but also in the creation of Al Shabaab. Trading along the coast exposed Somali merchants to those from the Middle East who practiced Wahhabi Islam, a more militant form also commonly known as Salafi. The followers of the Wahabi/Salafi sect seek to purge Islam of Western influence and improper legal interventions by returning to the religious instruction of the first generation of Muslims, the Salaf (McCants 2011). In order to gain favor with the foreign merchants and build a stronger trade relationship with other Islamic nations, Somalis began to adopt some of these practices, and subsequently introduced them into their homeland (Ahmed 2007).

As instability raged on, Somalis steadily grew weary and untrusting of their political system, but Islam remained steadfast. In times of danger, the safest place was often the mosque, and when government and clan leaders failed them, citizens found guidance from imams and other religious figures who preached a mixture of religion and Somali nationalism. Due to Somalia being predominantly Sunni Muslims, sectarian division was not an issue. Also, a new type of guidance emerged for Al Shabaab, combat veterans of foreign wars fighting in the name of Islam. Many of these warriors were not Somali, but from East African and Yemeni members of Al Qaeda, who sought refuge in the coastal nation, and subsequently provided training and experience, which would prove to be essential (Hansen 2013).

Recruitment

Recruitment was fairly easy because unemployed Somali youth had very few options in life, so an organization that emphasized Somali nationalism and self-dignity seemed like a perfect solution to their problems. Plus, joining Al Shabaab was often seen as their only means of survival, given no other sources to provide for themselves (Grover 2013). From another perspective, fear was often used as a recruitment tool. Members of the group would enter homes, forcing parents to give up their children, and if there was resistance, they were killed. Another tactic has been to enter into schools and force young boys to join, while forcing young women to become sex slaves or brides to the members (Grover 2013).

As mentioned previously, clanship played an important role in Somali society. However, in relation to Al Shabaab, clan was not as essential, and though many of them fought against each other in past clan skirmishes, they were able to put that behind them and focus on the outside enemy, such as the Somali transitional government and Ethiopia. Leaders were drawn from all clans, and unlike their Middle Eastern Al Qaeda counterparts, they did not allow foreigners to take on leadership roles (Hansen 2013). This is very unique because it did not follow the path of such groups like the Taliban and Al Qaeda. In spite of the training received by outsiders, they refused to let them completely run the group, which initially kept Al Shabaab as a nationalist movement. All this would change, but that will be discussed in more detail later.

Though foreign influence was initially limited, there was one faction that supported Al Shabaab in their initial stages that played an integral role in the weakening the Somali government. As mentioned during my definition of terrorism, states recognized by international bodies often participate in or support terrorist activities. In relation to Al Shabaab, this state is Eritrea. This relationship is rather exceptional considering that jihadists often conducted attacks in the more secular nation, and the fact that Eritrea condemned the mere notion of Al Shabaab. However, they had a common

enemy, Ethiopia. Al Shabaab's Faruq Unit often conducted attacks in Ethiopia, and were heavily supported by the Eritrean government under the notion that our enemy's enemy is our friend (Hansen 2013). This situation is very important because it establishes how fundamentalist terrorism can easily cross over into state terrorism, and how blurry the line can be when trying to determine the difference between the two.

Logistical and Financial Support

Logistical and financial support grew steadily as the group expanded. Initially, weapons and money came from TFG defectors, and from the Eritrean government, even though the nation has denied these transactions (Kisiangani 2011). Locally, Al-Shabaab is supported by community-based support structures, receiving assistance from mosques, religious leaders and community networks. (Kisiangani 2011). Furthermore, when Al Shabaab gained control of the port of Kismayo, it was reported that they made a deal with Somali pirates that the group would receive 20% of profits from hijacking (Childress 2010). Other Muslim nations such as Yemen, Syria, Iran, and Qatar, have long been believed to be a source of weapons and money for Al Shabaab (Joselow 2010). Another important source of funding has come from the Somali diaspora, which has been estimated to sending 500-800 million dollars to Al Shabaab a year (Menkhaus 2009). Such a support system has allowed the group to continue to grow, and if such support continues, they could easily support terrorist acts on a much larger scale.

Collective Action in Tactics

Though outnumbered significantly, Al Shabaab was able to weaken those that opposed them, including the Somali government and the Ethiopian military. AS formed squads of 8-10 men that initially conducted small arms offensive attacks on civil servants, activists, businessmen, and the Ethiopian backed Somali military. Soon, possibly due to foreign influence, they shifted to suicide attacks and the use of remote controlled devices (Hansen 2013). One interesting tactic that has been used is the occupancy of military outposts or unoccupied cities for short periods of time and

subsequent evacuation. I believe this was done for two possible reasons. The first is that Al Shabaab wanted to scare their opposition and lower their morale, ultimately leading to defection and even the refusal of Somali troops to occupy these posts, creating a path for Al Shabaab to establish a regional stronghold. On the other hand, this could expose a training and logistics flaw. After a post was taken, it is possible that they were not trained to establish defensive positions. Also, they may not have planned reinforcement rotations, or resupply to allow them to maintain the post. Regardless of potential problems, this unique tactic worked, and played a key role in forcing Ethiopian troops to withdraw in 2009.

Media

Al Shabaab turned to the media to express their desires, to educate others, and to recruit potential members. The group exploited the citizens' love of the internet to further their cause, creating websites full of pictures and poetry. Though the government regulated the internet, and often shut these sites down, Al Shabaab instantly created others. In 2011, the group seized a Mogadishu television station and created Al-Kitaib, an AS station that featured propaganda and other footage that displayed their strength (Harper 2102). It can also be assumed that Al Shabaab used radio stations as well, because one of their tactics to appeal to younger members was modern, Western style music such as rap. (Wright 2011).

Most of their media representation focused on two important aspects: religion and strength. These media outlets showed footage of pious Muslims from one angle and from the other, militants with faces covered and draped by weaponry, as well as those who were the enemies of Al Shabaab, who most likely met their death at their hands. These uses of various types of media have greatly benefited recruitment and the spread of ideology, especially amongst easily influenced youths that serve as the backbone of the organization (Marchal 2011).

The display of the duality of Islamic militancy was beneficial to the cause of Al

Shabaab, yet could have hurt them as well. As these outlets began to grow in popularity and reach, they began to feature fighters from other parts of the world, especially in Arab nations. Biographies of the leaders of Al Qaeda, such as Bin Ladin and Ayman al-Zawahiri were introduced to Somalia, with captions in Arabic, though later in Somali (Marchal 2011). The embracing of the battles of others may not have sat well with those who supported Al Shabaab as a nationalist organization. Though some power can be derived from the victories of others in the name of Islam, this could lead to mental defection among supporters who have little concern about that which exists outside of Somalia. It could also reignite memories of the forceful inundation of non-Somali ideologies, such as Western style authoritarianism by President Barre. There has been no proof of this happening as of yet, but in an organization that was once very local, yet now has international reach, this could be very possible.

The media also exposed Somalis to extreme violence at the hands of Al Shabaab. One example is the introduction to an element of culture that was not native to the nation, the martyrdom of those who died violently in the name of Islam. Though many Somalis died in civil wars and during battles with Ethiopia, they were not quickly hailed as heroes for a good cause, and with all the death still continuing, whether it be from war of hardships such as famine and disease, it may not have been something many were so quick to relive. Also, using the media to increase awareness could lead many to fear for their lives, especially if they do not support Al Shabaab wholeheartedly. Displays of kidnappings and senseless killings may show the power of the organization, but could also leave Somali citizens wondering about the true nature of the group, especially if they have seen little proof of any acts of goodwill. Once again, there is no proof of this, but I believe that Somali citizens have experienced so much death and destruction, and they don't want to continue on that path.

Foreign Influence

As stated earlier, foreign influence played a large role in making Al Shabaab what it is today. Many of the original group moved into Somalia after being wanted for offenses in their native countries, but this group soon expanded to arms dealers and war torn veterans of the Afghan-Russian war (Hansen 2013). Many of them, believed to be Al Qaida, have been seen as partially responsible for the Black Hawk Down incident in 1993. Though recognized as a potential problem to international security, no collaborative efforts were taken other than the United States supporting Ethiopia's invasion into Somalia in 2006. Recently the world has started to pay attention due to residents of Western nations leaving their homes to support the jihad in Somalia. Some of these residents are Somali refugees returning to the land they fled to avoid civil war. The FBI led "Operation Rhino" has recently exposed a connection to the group in Minneapolis, where Somali immigrant men have been recruited, and returned to Somalia to fight. Both US officials and Al Shabaab leaders have confirmed this, estimating that approximately 40 Americans are now in Somalia fighting, with the promise of paradise if they die in combat against the invaders (Ferran, Hughes, Kanani, and Ryan 2012). This comes as no surprise, for large Muslim communities have often been recruiting ground for groups like Al Qaeda and its affiliated movements such as Al Shabaab. Regardless, this could be a major problem for the Western world, because it may increase the possibility of an international terrorist attack on their turf. An example of this possibility is the July 2005 London subway attack that killed 26 people (Pflanz 2012).

However, what has been a slight surprise is that white Americans and Europeans are joining the fight. There have been isolated cases where a Westerner has joined the jihad, such as John Walker Lindh, who was captured fighting alongside the Taliban when US led coalition forces invaded Afghanistan, but situations as these send shockwaves throughout the global community (ASIL 2002). Two examples are Omar

Hammami from the United States and the British born Samantha Lewthwaite. Both were white and have provided support to Al Qaeda related movements in the past.

Omar Hammami, also known as Abu Mansour al Amriki, was born in Daphne Alabama 1984 to a white Christian mother and Muslim father of Syrian origin (Mastors, Siers 2014). Though he attended a Southern Baptist church with his mother, he began to lean towards Islam in the seventh grade after his father introduced him to his Syrian roots, and he learned that members of his family were jailed for being part of the Muslim Brotherhood, a group that gained popularity in Egypt, yet had members throughout the Middle East that called for spiritual reform and resorted to violence to further their agenda (Teitelbaum 2011). Hammami later moved to a Somali community in Toronto Canada, where he fell in love with Somali culture in Toronto. Inspired by the war in Iraq, Hammami traveled to Egypt in 2006 and later moved into Somalia to become a part of Al Shabaab (Hansen 2013). As a member of AL Shabaab, he became well known due to his use of social media to display his viewpoints and because of his lyrical rap skills, which made him popular among the youth in Somalia (Mastors, Siers 2014). The FBI placed a 5 million dollar reward for Hammami, but it was not Americans who killed him. In September 2013, he was killed by fellow Al Shabaab members. Many believed this was due to his criticism of the extravagant life led by the leaders of the group (Brown, Straw 2013).

Samantha Lewthwaite, aka the “White Widow,” gained the world’s attention when her husband, Germaine Lindsay, who was one of four bombers, conducted an attack on a London subway that killed 26 people, as well as the bombers. Though she professed complete “incomprehension” at his “horrific” act, she disappeared weeks later with her two children by Lindsey (Pflanz 2012). It was believed that she fled to Kenya, where she joined Al Shabaab, possibly planning small attacks, and even taking a leadership role. It was initially thought that she was one of the terrorists that were killed in the Westgate Mall attack in Nairobi, Kenya, an attack claimed by Al Shabaab that left

62 civilians dead (Karimi 2013). Forensics proved otherwise, and recently reports have surfaced that she is now married to a senior Al Qaeda member. Though her whereabouts are unknown, it is believed that she is hiding in Kenya or Somalia, and is currently wanted by British and Kenyan officials (Karimi 2013).

The Western world has become more alert due to the movement of its residents into extremist organizations outside of their homelands. From the perspective of Al Shabaab's collective action, this could be positive. Mere recognition has the potential to elevate their struggle to a position that will attract many fighters who share their sentiments. This exposure also shows that they are being taken seriously, and they could amass power just by reputation and perceived threat. The introduction of foreigners creates a network of worldwide allies who can provide financial and logistical support, which is essential for Al Shabaab's survival. It also creates a worldwide fear, which in many ways is more powerful and detrimental than physical attacks.

From an opposite perspective, foreign influence and Western recognition could be detrimental to Al Shabaab. As mentioned before, the organization originally kept non-Somalis from holding positions of authority. However, even if they remain steadfast on this rule, the mere presence of white skin amongst dark faces will cause a shift of focus to understand why foreigners are joining a fight that is not theirs. But this does not appear to be very common. When the Westgate attacks occurred, the media went into frenzy after receiving word that a foreigner was possibly involved, therefore slightly downplaying the significance of the attack and taking the lens off of Al Shabaab.

While I was deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq, a report of any foreign fighters in the area was a top priority, because they were known to put up a more fierce fight than the native terrorists, and it was our goal to discover their methods for crossing the borders to join the fight. The fight was not in their homeland, but they were ready to leave home to fight the invaders from the West. It may not have been their fight, but it was the fight of their kinsmen, bound together by religion and an extreme disdain of the West. From

another angle, I witnessed how outside influence often led to dissidence amongst Al Qaeda in Iraq specifically. The leader of this faction has never been an Iraqi, and oftentimes I would talk to detainees about their confusion as to why a foreigner was in charge as opposed to a local fighter. The reason I bring this up is because it provides a frame as to why I previously mentioned how foreign influence could make or break Al Shabaab.

Chapter V The Future of Al Shabaab

Though the future prowess of Al Shabaab is uncertain, they appear to have some longevity, but whether or not they will ever gain legitimacy in the eyes of Somali citizens and the world is unknown. Currently the group is conducting attacks in both Kenya and Somalia as a show of force, with targets ranging from government buildings to tourist spots. This is obviously a scare tactic, though some dispute if they are actually responsible. Recently, Al Shabaab claimed responsibility for attacks along the Kenyan coast that left 29 dead, but Kenyan officials publicly declared that their investigations showed otherwise, and that local dissident groups were responsible (Akwiri 2014). In February 2014, Al Shabaab militants attacked the Somali presidential palace, killing two government officials, but the fighters were killed by guards before doing any more damage. In July 2014, they tried again and though they managed to penetrate the building's walls by bombing one entrance and storming in, when they detonated the suicide vests they were wearing, they killed only themselves. Subsequently, a spokesperson for the group announced that Al Shabaab had taken over the palace, but this proved to be false (Nor, Capeluoto 2014) .

The aforementioned attacks appear to be acts of desperation in an effort to strike fear and demonstrate their power. Small scale attacks once worked for Al Shabaab, but with the federal government that took power in 2012 after the election of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, they have had trouble gaining strongholds due to the legitimacy of the new Somali government, something that did not exist for decades. With this legitimacy comes the return of embassies from countries such as the United States, Great Britain, Turkey, and China (Reuters 2014). From one angle, this may give Al Shabaab more targets, but it is unlikely that they will suppress the power of these nations.

Hope in Somalia and Indicators of a Weakened Al Shabaab

There is no doubt that the mention of Al Shabaab continues to strike fear in the hearts of Somalia's citizens, but there have been incidents that show that the new government is taking steps to reclaim power and lessen that possessed by Al Shabaab. In 2012, the US State Department offered \$33 million through its Rewards for Justice program to help suppress the group, which includes a \$7 million bounty for its leader, Ahmed Abdi Godane. Also, Ethiopian, Kenyan, and African Union troops are working with the Somali government to collect intelligence and conduct attacks on Al Shabaab strongholds. (Ibrahim 2012). So far this has been successful, because Al Shabaab has been forced into a much smaller territory, therefore their ability to expand has been severely crippled. A testament to this success occurred 01 September 2014, when Godane was killed by a US airstrike. Though suffering a debilitating loss, the group quickly named a new leader, Ahmed Umar, also known as Abu Ubaidah (Mohamed 2014). Little is known about him, but it is apparent that he plans on avenging their comrade's death by continuing attacks throughout Somalia.

From a human rights perspective, it is definitely positive that Somalia has accepted help from other nations. However, this can lead to further chaos. As seen in the past, outside intervention has led to the mistrust of the Somali government, which could ultimately be at risk for neocolonialism and returned imperialism. Also, many citizens remember the United States' failed attempt at instilling order during the First Battle of Mogadishu, as well as Ethiopia's attempt to invade. Both instances could lead to mistrust of the foreigners, and this could actually end up supporting Al Shabaab's ideology of preventing foreign influence.

What about the Children?

As mentioned before, Al Shabaab notoriously used children soldiers to carry out their destructive plans, keeping them from school and taking them away from their families, already weakened by poverty and fear. The opportunity for a formal education

was slim, especially for young boys, who had to take to the street to earn money to support their families. Regardless of this sad reality, there is new hope. Somalia has created a program called Go2School that will provide free education to over 1 million children. (Guled 2014). This free education will lessen the need to work odd jobs on the streets that puts these young souls at risk, and reduces the ability of Al Shabaab to recruit them with the promise of a better life.

However, this could actually make certain schools and students a target of those who disagree with this program and its teachings. Al Shabaab leaders have publicly stated that these schools are legitimate targets due to their secularized intentions (Guled 2014). Such tactics were used by the Taliban in Afghanistan, and unfortunately their actions kept children from going to school, and those who taught at these institutions were frequently assassinated. Somalia currently has one of the worst literacy rates in the world, and it is unfortunate that learning how to read and write can be a death sentence. Still, there are those who persevere to educate their fellow citizens, and this will be the key to overcoming oppression.

Women of Somalia

Even though the women of Somalia are not responsible for the fighting, they constantly suffer at the hands of an altered form of Islam imposed by men who see them as inferior. They are restricted in every aspect of their lives, including form of dress, and ability to live without the fear of sexual assault or persecution. Recently, Somali women have been fighting to have a voice in their nation, and slowly, they are seeing some change. One major change is the ability of women to attend competitive soccer games and sit where they please. These matches, which had not occurred since 1991, were controlled by Islamic fundamentalists who banned the mixing of sexes, so women were not allowed to even attend (Nor 2013). Now these women can attend such events, sit next to the opposite sex, and not lock themselves in their homes out of fear. This may seem like a rather infinitesimal step towards progress, but the fact that

these women are able to experience some type of freedom free of gender discrimination is truly uplifting. Hopefully such progress will continue, and gender equality will be achieved.

The discussion of women and children serves the purpose of showing that there have been steps taken to provide them with basic human rights. Doing so will reduce the influence of Al Shabaab's doctrine, also giving Somali citizens hope that their government is supporting them, something that was not seen for so long. Even though the attacks may continue, the actions of Somali leadership that reflect their desire to help their people will slowly lead to an increased legitimacy of the government, while slowly chipping away at the validity of Al Shabaab's existence.

Chapter VI Conclusion

Revisiting Theory

When I began my research on Al Shabaab, I had trouble finding a theory that fit the rise and potential fall of the group. However, the combination of power and collective action allowed me to thoroughly analyze trends of successes and failures. I have found that my proposed theories were accurate, yet some parts of them were weaker when trying to explain the rise of Al Shabaab. For example, the initial collective action strengthened the group without the presence of a stable government, but once one was established, this same collective action did not evolve, and it could serve detrimental to the legitimacy of these jihadists as they continue their fight. Also, I realized that it was not the reduction of collective action of opposing forces that gave power to Al Shabaab, but the complete lack of collective action of the transitional government that gave them their opportunity to expand their influence. If there was any governmental unity, Al Shabaab would not have grown as it did, nor would they be a threat to international security today.

Types and Levels of Power

Throughout my research, I discovered how the various types and levels of power appeared throughout the rise of Al Shabaab. However, I began to formulate the idea that each type or level was more of a goal, and each was equally important from the perspectives of Al Shabaab and those who opposed them. Also, I noticed that at times, each type or level of power could have occurred simultaneously. My findings regarding Gaventa's (2006) types of power follow.

Power Over: Al Shabaab obtained power over various regions through small attacks and fear tactics. These actions rendered local citizens, as well as government officials powerless, and as Al Shabaab's power grew, they were able to continue these activities. This power over was initially achieved at a local level, but grew to a national level of power as they continued to expand and dominate.

Power To/Power Within: I grouped these two together, because they are very similar, and they seem to work in the same capacity. Al Shabaab derived their motivation from a long nationalistic history as well as from Islam, both which that fueled their desire to take back their country from a corrupt government, and to prevent unneeded outside influence, especially from the West. By trying to implement sharia law and resisting Western culture and teachings, Al Shabaab was able to maintain power that was based on isolationism, therefore establishing power at the national level.

Power With: This initially occurred at the local level, for Al Shabaab was able to surpass tribal affiliations to unify into the organization it became. From these alliances, their power became national, especially after they obtained some form of governmental legitimacy. Even after they became too radical for the transitional government, they were able to maintain that power by showing that they had the skill and prowess to prevent Ethiopia's invasion. Al Shabaab's power began to become international even before the unrest in the 1990's began. Many of its leaders fought the jihad in Afghanistan, therefore establishing connections that would benefit them. Also, Al Qaeda members used Somalia for refuge, therefore continuing that potential of international power. As mentioned before, Al Shabaab gained an ally in Eritrea, a nation who benefited from the group because they shared an enemy in Ethiopia. Lastly, Al Shabaab declared its allegiance to Al Qaeda, therefore elevating them to an international organization. The financial backing from such a large and powerful group allowed recruitment outside of Somalia, which furthered their ideological reach, truly giving them international implications.

Legitimacy: Al Shabaab has experienced various ups and downs of their legitimacy. Once seen as a force that would protect Somalia from a corrupt government and outside influence, their violence against those that once supported them, as well as their own members, has cause their validity to dissipate. Also, their premeditated attacks such as the one at the Westgate Mall, which killed over a hundred innocent people has shown Somali

citizens, as well as the rest of the world, that they are ruthless, and that they are not conducting these acts in the name of Allah, but as a show of force with no true reason.

Final Thoughts

Al Shabaab grew out of the confusion and turmoil that plagued Somalia, and the ideologies originally adopted, such as transcending clanship and the focus on Islam were the forces that provided them with their initial validity. As the transitional government failed to provide any hope for Somali citizens, Al Shabaab picked up the slack and exemplified strength through nationalism. This was only temporary, for the same corruption that inundated the government made its way into the organization's ranks, and those in power became more concerned with their own agendas as opposed to the plight of their people, who were often their targets if they did not live up to the radicalized standard of Islam adopted by Al Shabaab. I believe this will lead to their demise, regardless of their allegiance to Al Qaeda. Al Qaeda related movements have begun to regroup and take territories in places like Iraq and Mali, so it can be assumed that any support will go to establishing regional strongholds, and with the introduction of foreign diplomacy back to Somalia, this will be difficult for Al Shabaab to do in their nation of origin.

Though I think that Al Shabaab will never reclaim the glory they possessed in the late 2000s, I do believe that they will remain a threat to Somalia and neighboring countries, but will not reach international levels. A comparison that comes to mind is that Al Shabaab is like a child bully that wants to show off to everyone. They conduct attacks to kill and maim, but they do not seem to have a focus anymore, and soon their followers will lose faith in the organization because there appears to be no goal other than to destroy.

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